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ABSTRACT

Most college students are seeking a college education to increase their money-making skills. In turn, they want to have money to buy better leisure activities. For this reason, leisure counseling should be included in college career counseling services. From a psychological perspective, leisure facilitates identification with various concepts, increases autonomy, provides mastery experiences, encourages community involvement, and encourages creativity. As work fulfills fewer individual needs, leisure will play a more important role in meeting those needs. Although some colleges and universities throughout the country are offering leisure awareness programs, leisure counseling is still an infrequent service. Steps to incorporate such a program in campus counseling services include staff development, information gathering about campus extracurricular activities, evaluation of the value and need for those activities, and the initiation of a promotional campaign. Counselors have the responsibility of promoting healthy alternatives to potentially detrimental misuses of leisure time. (This document briefly describes numerous instruments to assist counselors in identifying the leisure interests and preferences of clients, as well as research references.) (BL)

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LEISURE AS A CAMPUS DEVELOPMENTAL RESOURCE; TWO PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE

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LEISURE AS A CAMPUS DEVELOPMENTAL RESOURCE; TWO PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE

> Leisure is not a trivial or superficial fringe area of human functioning. It can represent the fullest expression and development of our drive toward freedom, fulfillment, and actualization.
>
> (Blocher & Siegel, 1984)

Most college students are on campus these days for one main reason--to upgrade their money-making skills. This statement has been verified by an annual survey of over 254,000 entering freshmen from 498 U.S. universities and colleges. The survey, a joint project of the University of California at Los Angeles and the American Council on Education, found that the students' desire to be very well-off financially reached an all-time high in the fall of 1983 (Roark, 1984).

What do students want with so much money? Power? Fame? Security? Self-satisfaction? The author's clinical impression of this phenomenon over a six year period as a graduate student and instructor is that the students want a great deal of money so they can buy themselves and their families better leisure activities. They want such things as: cruises and foreign travel, sports cars and recreation vehicles, ski vacations, club memberships, season tickets, vacation homes, swimming pools, audio, video and computer equipment, boats and airplanes, musical instruments, adventure excursions, fine art, stylish clothes, and numerous other items <u>all</u> equated with leisure. Apparently, the students feel that the best things in life are no longer free, and they are willing to work for the money to buy the leisure pleasures

that are of vital importance to them. Even the altruistically inclined who wish to give time and money to improving the human condition are contemplating a leisure activity.

The author is not the only one who has spent time observing the swing toward leisure on the college campus. Weiner and Hunt, at the University of Kentucky, noticed the trend and decided to research the orientation of students toward work and toward leisure. They found that, in general, students possess a stronger orientation toward leisure than toward work (Weiner & Hunt, 1983). This does not mean that the students are not interested in work, not at all, but it does mean that what they do in their offwork hours is more important to them. Weiner and Hunt looked also at earlier research by Weiner and associates (Weiner, Payne, & Remer, 1980). The latter had determined that only a small percentage of college career planning and placement centers around the country offered any assistance in leisure planning. Weiner and Hunt concluded that career counseling in universities should broaden its focus to include some type of leisure counseling to assist students develop the leisure aspects of their lives.

Benefits of Leisure

The author feels that college administrators should take advantage of the strong student orientation toward leisure and use it to increase the scope and benefit of college life. What are the benefits of leisure? From a psychological viewpoint, according to Dowd (Dowd, 1984), leisure experience facilitates identification with concepts and thus aids in learning a variety of interests, ideals, goals, and language. It provides increased autonomy

which leads to independent thinking, expands one's range of funtioning and self-determination, and gives an increased sense of freedom from external constraints. It provides mastery experiences by supplying a feeling of competence and control when learning new leisure skills or when demonstrating activities one does well. It gives an increased sense of freedom from external constraints, the freedom to choose whether to participate in an activity or not. It allows spontaneous commitment and involvement and can give a sense of community and relationship with others. It promotes a life balance, because one can satisfy unmet needs during leisure time or complement needs satisfied by work. It encourages creativity and self-expression, of particular importance for those whose work does not foster divergent thinking, and it provides a personal meaning to life.

The above benefits of leisure are particularly beneficial to college students who are in a concencrated process of adult life development (Bloland, 1984). In addition, the decrease in the number of satisfying jobs in the past decade (Underpaid and under-utilized, 1979; McDaniels, in press) points to the benefit of ample leisure knowledge to the student soon to be in the workplace. Workers whose work fulfills too few of their needs will know how to fulfill some of them during offwork time if they are aware of what they want and of the selection of leisure activities open to them (Bloland & Edwards, 1981; Lewis & Gilhousen, 1981).

Role of Leisure in Career/Lifestyle Planning

The central purpose of Weiner's and Hunt's article was to create an awareness of the role of leisure in career and lifestyle. They believe that this awareness translates on campus into programs that help individuals find

psychological satisfaction in work and leisure, and that such programs are in the province of college career planning, placement, and counseling centers. The author and Paul Bloland, the presenter of the other perspective referred to in the title of this article, agree completely. When Bloland and Edwards met in 1975, Bloland was an authority on career counseling and Edwards was a leisure counseling specialist. They found that they had both come separately to the same conclusion--when planning one's life, whether for short or long term, one should give the same consideration to leisure as to work. Their conclusions had been predicated on contemporary studies that showed an increase in the average worker's leisure time (Neulinger, 1974) and a decrease in the number of satisfying jobs (O'Toole, 1975). They realized also that there was a similarity between their two counseling processes, that the processes overlapped and complemented each other. After experimenting for some years, searching for the best method to synthesize career and leisure counseling, they proposed a four-step counseling model using the basic needs of counselees as a starting point (Bloland & Edwards, 1981).

As most campuses offer some type of career counseling and guidance, Bloland and the author then studied the practical possibilities for introducing their ideas of synthesized career and leisure counseling to these centers. Bloland's research resulted in a presentation, aimed particularly toward the student development educator and the campus administrator, about the significant benefits of leisure to the affective, cognitive, and physical growth of college students (Bloland, 1984, in press). The author's research led to information on leisure counseling programs that already had been introduced into campus life, on ways to add a leisure dimension into career centers, on existing instruments that could be used at the centers, on the misuse of leisure time on campus, and on research that had examined leisure

needs, satisfactions, motivations, choices and attitudes. This information was presented in tandem with Bloland's report (Edwards, 1984). It will be summarized here.

Leisure Awareness Programs Introduced on Campus

The following programs are selected from the few that have been offered to the whole student body of a campus with the intention of making everyone more aware of leisure options. They are extremely varied in scope.

The Director of Career Planning and Placement at Wright State University combines career and leisure guidance to individuals and groups at no charge (C.P. Rider, personal communication, July 29,1981).

Texas Woman's University has a Leisure Resource Room that is an information center and meeting place where students can drop in and compare activities and events. There is leisure consulting available but no counseling (Hudson, 1980).

The University of Southern Illinois at Carbondale has a Leisure Exploration Service for which recreation students are trained to counsel their peers on the uses of leisure time. It is also an information service on the activities available in the area (D. McEwen, personal communication, February 27,1978, November 11, 1979 & E. Leoni, personal communication, Fall 1977, July 1981).

Slippery Rock State College has a Do-It-Yourself Career Room which has a Leisure Station supplying information on self-adminstered leisure counseling programs and local leisure activities (J. Landrum, personal communication, March, 1979).

Kansas State University offered a five-day Leisure Counseling Workshop

to the students and the community. It was a joint venture of the Department of Education and the Department of Health, Physical Education and Recreation (D. Lindley, personal communication, June, 19, 1980).

The University of Oregon has an ongoing Outdoor Program that maintains a resource room with information on outdoor recreation. It is a popular meeting place for students interested in adventure (Grimm & Neal, 1980). The University presented a Leisure Faire in 1976 (McDaniels, 1982).

The Department of Co-curricular and Leisure Programs at Temple University classifies leisure interests and needs and helps students identify their needs and skills through participation. The program is interested in educating students about leisure (Cashel & Krause, 1980).

In the mid-70's the Center for Student Life at the University of Missouri-Columbia, the Testing and Counseling Department, and the Department of Recreation and Park Adminstration began developing a model for a leisure counseling program to be accomplished in three phases. It was anticipated that the program would take some years to fund and put into operation (Epperson, Witt, & Hitzhusen, 1977).

The Milwaukee Public Schools department of Recreation and Adult Education developed a leisure counseling program in the mid-70's. It has taken many forms since its original conception using a computer. The program is continuing in reduced form under Community Education and also is being offered to the community through outlets other than the schools (Milwaukee Public Schools, personal communication, November 1975 & G.T. Wilson, personal communication, March 30, 1984.)

Emporia State University created a Play Factory to increase the scope of traditional recreation and provide alternative methods of play (Harper, 1980).

The Counseling and Student Development Center at Northern Illinois University initiated the use of cable television to carry messages about activities to students on and off the campus. After being introduced to a topic, the viewer is referred to the oncampus resource offering an activity related to the topic (Schenk & Wiscons, 1984).

Ways to Add a Leisure Dimension to Career Centers

It would seem ideal if a single college discipline could train leisure counselors to serve the general public, on and off the campus, but that is not possible at this time. There are several disciplines that give courses or parts of courses in leisure guidance. The main ones are counseling, psychology, counselor education, health, and leisure studies (or recreation), and each slants the training toward its particular interest It is generally agreed that leisure counseling is a multi-discipline subject when it deals with the nontherapeutic public, but no one field has full sponsorship (Edwards, 1983). Until leisure counselor training programs are organized to cut across the disciplines and present all facets of the subject, college administrators and student development educators wishing to use leisure as a developmental resource may wish to follow the recommendation of Weiner, Hunt, Bloland and the author and seek to add a leisure dimension to an already existing career counseling center.

Providing the career center personnel consent to expand their service to include leisure, here are some steps the author suggests to the personnel: 1) consult with a leisure counselor/consultant who can help train you to set up a program that blends painlessly with your present one; 2) gather a list of campus extra-curricular activities and organizations to which a student could

be referred; 3) contact these activities and groups, find out what they do, and ask their cooperation in receiving referred students; 4) estimate, with the consultant's help, what needs and values each of these campus leisure activities can satisfy for a student (some overachievers even need assistance in recognizing leisure time); 5) start a promotional campaign to educate students and faculty about the importance of good leisure in one's personal and career development.

Career/leisure counselors will learn from the leisure counseling consultant how to help people recognize their leisure needs and values through questionnaires or tests. Counselors will learn also how to help counselees decide if they want new leisure activities, and if so, which campus activities are most likely to satisfy their current needs. As career/leisure authorities, the counselors should make it clear to counselees that in the present job market, some of their desires will be satisfied during work and others that cannct be met during work can be satisfied during leisure.

Existing Instruments for Leisure Counseling

The word "instrument" is used here in its broadest sense. The instruments may be formal tests, informal surveys, questionnaires, films, computer software, slides and other methods of assisting people to assess their leisure attitudes, skills, interests, and limitations. Or they may be merely ways to elict interest in the subject of leisure. Many instruments used in career guidance reveal leisure preferences and vice versa. The various tools listed below may be combined with the numerous career guidance methods now being used on campus.

Some of the printed instruments are; Constructive Leisure Activity Surveys #1 and #2 and Constructive Leisure Questionnaire, produced by Constructive Leisure, Los Angeles, CA; Leisure Activities Blank and Manual, published by Consulting Psychologists Press Palo Alto, CA; Leisure Exploration Group and Vocational Exploration Group, from Studies for Urban Man, Tempe, AR; Leisure Well-being Inventory, from Leisure Lifestyle Consultants, Eugene, OR; Mirenda Leisure Interest Finder, from Milwaukee Public Schools, Community Education.

A combination leisure activity card sort/slides and test called Leisurescope is produced by Leisure Dynamics, Colorado Springs, CO. Another activity card sort comes from Avocational Counseling Research, Sussex, WI. Ramic Productions, Newport Beach, CA has a behavioral film series that features adventurous activities. Bay Area Teleguide in San Francisco is the first U.S. computerized public-access information system. Numerous terminals around the city allow the public to call up on the screen the latest in theater, movie, sport, restaurant, hotel, store, and other entertainment information. A similar system could be instigated on a campus to give the latest information on campus leisure activities to students, teachers, and other campus personnel.

A new tool called a UMap has been developed to guide students to the academic, vocational, and leisure activities that seem to suit their particular type. The tool takes the form of six different posters or folders, one for each of the basic personality types described by Holland (Jacoby, Rue, & Allen, 1984). The Office of Campus Activities, University of Maryland, College Park has information on this project.

Misuse of Leisure Time on Campus

The immediate object of counseling students for leisure is to assist them in becoming involved with beneficial, growth-producing, non-harmful activities during their campus experience. Socializing, a favorite leisure activity of most students (Laudie, 1980), is the one during which too many students, particularly freshmen, choose to misuse their leisure time (P.A. Bloland, personal communication, November 1983). Freshmen are usually the ones who take advantage of their new personal freedom to choose a peer group that indulges in an excess of alcohol, drugs, gambling, violence, or other harmful pastimes. Other types of students are in potentially dangerous situations, too. They are the lonely ones who have trouble communicating for one reason or another. They can easily fall into using their leisure time harmfully and unwisely for lack of anything else to do in that time.

The author defines the misuse of leisure time as the pursuit of a leisure activity that physically or mentally can harm the individual who chooses it or someone else. One benefit of leisure counseling is making individuals aware of socially acceptable, unharmful activities that can be chosen as satisfying alternatives to harmful ones. For this reason, if for no other, college administrators should assist the leisure counseling personnel to reach out to all students. The author feels that by intelligently promoting alternatives to the misuse of leisure, administrators and counselors can intervene in their students' lives in a beneficial and non-autocratic way. Leisure knowledge is a vital and hitherto undeveloped facet to college learning.

Leisure Research

There has been a respectable amount of reseach done since the mid 1970's on various aspects of leisure that indicates its value to human development. This information will be of interest to campus administrators, student development educators, and student counselors who are contemplating including a leisure unit in the assistance they offer their students. Published reports on research devoted to leisure attitude, choice, motivation, need, and satisfaction are listed at the end of this article following the references. Most of the references listed also contain leisure research reports.

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